

In the Claims:

1. (Currently Amended) A tracheal cannula for insertion through a tracheotomy incision following a tracheotomy into a patient's trachea, at a position below the larynx, the trachea having a cross-sectional area, said cannula having a shaft and a cuff for blocking the tracheal cross-sectional area surrounding the shaft wherein a shaft section extends above the cuff, characterized in that section of the shaft lying above the cuff has a window covered by an air-permeable membrane, wherein the air-permeable membrane has sufficient permeability to allow for patient vocalization.
2. (Previously Presented) The cannula based on claim 1, characterized such that the membrane is not permeable to water.
3. (Previously Presented) The cannula based on claim 2, characterized such that the membrane consists essentially of polytetrafluoroethylene (PTFE).
4. (Previously Presented) The cannula based on claim 2, characterized such that the membrane comprises polytetrafluoroethylene (PTFE).
5. (Previously Presented) The cannula based on claim 3, characterized such that the membrane comprises a fabric made of PTFE lacing.
6. (Previously Presented) The cannula based on claim 4, characterized in that the membrane consists of a fabric made of PTFE lacing.
7. (Previously Presented) The cannula based on claim 1, characterized such that at the entrance of the cannula, a valve is provided which opens upon inhalation and closes upon exhalation.

8. (Previously Presented) The cannula based on claim 2, characterized such that at the entrance of the cannula, a valve is provided which opens upon inhalation and closes upon exhalation.
9. (Previously Presented) The cannula based on claim 3, characterized such that at the entrance of the cannula, a valve is provided which opens upon inhalation and closes upon exhalation.
10. (Previously Presented) The cannula based on claim 4, characterized such that at the entrance of the cannula, a valve is provided which opens upon inhalation and closes upon exhalation.
11. (Previously Presented) The cannula based on claim 5, characterized such that at the entrance of the cannula, a valve is provided which opens upon inhalation and closes upon exhalation.
12. (Previously Presented) The cannula based on claim 6, characterized such that at the entrance of the cannula, a valve is provided which opens upon inhalation and closes upon exhalation.
13. (Previously Presented) The cannula based on claim 1, characterized such that the cuff is connected via a line to balloon means for the inflation of the cuff and for controlling the cuff pressure.
14. (Previously Presented) The cannula based on claim 2, characterized such that the cuff is connected via a line to balloon means for the inflation of the cuff and for controlling the cuff pressure.

Response Under 37 C.F.R. 1.116 (After Final)
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15. (Previously Presented) The cannula based on claim 3, characterized such that the cuff is connected via a line to balloon means for the inflation of the cuff and for controlling the cuff pressure.
16. (Previously Presented) The cannula based on claim 4, characterized such that the cuff is connected via a line to balloon means for the inflation of the cuff and for controlling the cuff pressure.
17. (Previously Presented) The cannula based on claim 5, characterized such that the cuff is connected via a line to balloon means for the inflation of the cuff and for controlling the cuff pressure.
18. (Previously Presented) The cannula based on claim 6, characterized such that the cuff is connected via a line to balloon means for the inflation of the cuff and for controlling the cuff pressure.
19. (Previously Presented) The cannula based on claim 7, characterized such that the cuff is connected via a line to balloon means for the inflation of the cuff and for controlling the cuff pressure.
20. (Previously Presented) The cannula based on claim 13, wherein said balloon means comprises a pilot balloon.